The DEScriber

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In Brief

We value
employees and
strive to create
organizational
pride.

New Health Insurance Options

The state of Arizona has released its new health plan choices for employees, which will take effect Oct. 1, 2001. Under the new one-year contract with CIGNA HealthCare, the state will offer health plan options to serve its approximately 130,000 employees and their dependents in metropolitan and rural areas. The contract can be renewed for up to seven years.

The request for proposal was issued in December 2000 to address rising health care costs and to improve provider access and availability in the rural counties. The award follows a six month sealed proposal and evaluation process. An evaluation committee, which included state employees representing urban and rural areas, large and small agencies, the universities and the courts, reviewed responses to the RFP. Based on the review, the committee decided on an exclusive award to CIGNA HealthCare for the ADOA Saguaro Program participants.

Under the contract, employees may select from the following benefits design options:

■ Rural Employees: Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), which does not require employees to select a primary care physician and allows them to select any provider, with employees paying less if they select a contracted CIGNA HealthCare physician, hospital or facility. The PPO will be provided to rural employees at an employees cost equal to the lowest plan in Phoenix and Tucson.

☐ Metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson Employees: PPO, Point of Service (POS) and HMO. Under the POS plan, employees have the option to go out-of-network to receive services.

According to the last two employee satisfaction surveys, CIGNA HealthCare outpaced the other carriers with ratings of 87 percent
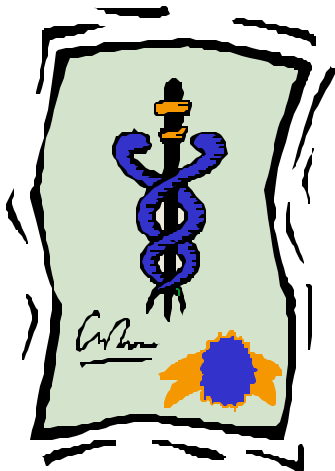
Director's Column

by John L. Clayton

"Heroes come in every shape and size, making special sacrifices for others in their lives. No one gives them medals. The world doesn't know their names. But in someone's eyes they're heroes just the same."

--Paul Overstreet

When we talk about an everyday *hero*, we use the term hero to refer to a man or woman who, as defined in Webster's dictionary, is a "central personage taking an admirable part in any remarkable action or event." As we see it, the "remarkable action" is simply the ability to continuously give to others through life. Thus, everyday heroes are those men and women who have found and are manifesting their giving spirit.

The secret is in the journey itself. With the hero's attitude towards resolving challenges, you can use everything that happens to you in life as a lesson to move you more deeply into the flow of giving and all of its benefits.

The true hero meets challenges in a special way. Being heroic is being passionately committed to some course of action. If you look at the high points in your life, you'll see that many of them come from situations that initially seemed impossible or even terrifying. You made a commitment to do them. The heroic nature of that commitment draws support. Being the everyday hero is about discovering our human divinity, that powerful, creative source that we each have within us and by living it. Being a hero is about being committed to the journey of life in the highest possible sense.

There are many heroes in DES all over the state. The DEScriber has a section called "Bragging Writes" that features a few of the many letters received regularly at our offices statewide thanking you for the quality service provided to our clients on a daily basis. This is a good example of what I'm referring to as a hero. I have met many of you and simply wanted to take this time to acknowledge all of you and to thank you for your commitment to the many individuals, families and children we serve. I, along with the Governor, will continue our commitment to support you on all levels. You are all truly the heroes.

> There are many heroes in DES all over the state.

and 90 percent in 1999 and 2000. The plan has received commendable accreditation for three of its delivery systems by the National Committee for Quality Assurance, the premier review organization for managed care plans nationwide.

As of April 2001, CIGNA HealthCare already provides health insurance coverage to approximately 33,000 State employees and their dependents or approximately 25 percent of the individuals throughout the state. With the addition of the State of Arizona account that figure rises to approximately 600,000, making CIGNA HealthCare one of the oldest and largest managed care companies in the state.

PARTNERS FOR ACTION, CHANGE AND EXCELLENCE

PACE

The Department of Economic Security is a leader among AZ state agencies for, among other things, Quality Management. One mechanism the department has in place to maintain its quality effort is Partners for Action, Change and Excellence (PACE).

PACE is an organization comprised of the middle managers of the Department, primarily Program Administrators and Office Chiefs. The group, which was established in 1992 has approximately 55 members. In addition to the standing members, each district has a representative from among the District Program Managers. Over the years, the mission of the group has evolved. The current mission and goals of PACE are:

" . . . *to partner with the executive team in the development and implementation of the DES strategic plan. We share, compare, and learn for the purpose of continuously improving the quality of service within our operations and throughout the agency*."

PACE Goals:
1.   Become educated on Total Quality tools, skills, and practice
2.   Integrate quality into operations
3.   Promote interdivi-

sional communication and coordination
4.   Increase interaction with Executive Team
5.   Increase awareness of major

initiatives

Generally speaking, anyone who reports directly to an Assistant or Associate Director is a member of PACE; however, each Assistant or Associate Director determines actual membership for his or her division.

As new members join PACE, they may request or be offered a mentor from among the membership to orient them as to the purpose and functioning of the group.

PACE meets on the third Wednesday of every month, with the exceptions of August and December. All meetings are held at the ASU Downtown Center. Most meetings are from 8 a.m. until noon. Once per quarter, the group meets until 5 p.m. Usually training is conducted in the afternoon during all-day meetings. All District Program Managers are invited to at least one all-day PACE meeting per year. All members are expected to attend every month. Exceptions to attendance include leave or travel status, testifying at the legislature, or approval of the Assistant or Associate Director. Members who will not be at a meeting should notify one of the PACE Co-Chairs. The current Co-Chairs are Barbara Ruddy and Phil Hersha.

PACE Co-Chairs establish agendas and conduct the meetings. The Co-Chairs are nominated by the membership and appointed by the Director. There is no formal length of term.

Agendas are developed using input from meeting evaluations. PACE members suggest topics of interest for future meetings and these are reviewed, prioritized and incorporated into agendas.

In order to strengthen the relationship between PACE and the District Quality Councils (DQC's), PACE members serve as Resource Partners for each of the six districts. The role of the resource partners is to assist the DQC's by eliminating roadblocks and garnering support for improvement initiatives in the district.

eBiz

Internet Project

Planning Phase

DES is embarking on an expansion of its current business initiatives to include the establishment of a corporate Internet (worldwide) / In**tra**net (internal to DES) / Extranet (DES partners) environment. The "No Wrong Door" initiative, championed by the Governor's Office and other DES program developments are driving key initiatives to new levels; where core business functions and processes will be extended out to end users, vendors, and service providers, using web technologies. To be positioned to support these major projects and initiatives, the Division of Business and Technology Services (DBTS) engaged Analysts International (AI) to work with an "Internet Core Team" to analyze DES' current web presence, architecture, processes, and organizational structure and to provide best practices, recommendations, and high-level action steps.

The Internet Core Team consisted of: Shirley York – Project Lead – DBTS/Acting IT Planning Manager Albert Barbieri - DBTS/ Office of Technology Services (OTS) Terry Crane - DBTS/ Office of Technology Services (OTS) David DePace – Division of Benefits & Medical Eligibility/ReDESign Project Christine Dicken - DBTS/ Office of Technology Services (OTS) Nali Giliana - Office of Communication/Web Master Jane Murr - DBTS/ Office of Technology

Services (OTS) Art Olin - DBTS/ Competitive Government & Operations Support.

Analysts International (AI) were asked to:

☐ Provide an assessment of the current DES web environment and the organization and processes in place to support an internet/ intranet/extranet environment;

■ Provide input regarding best practices on organization, processes, and architecture;
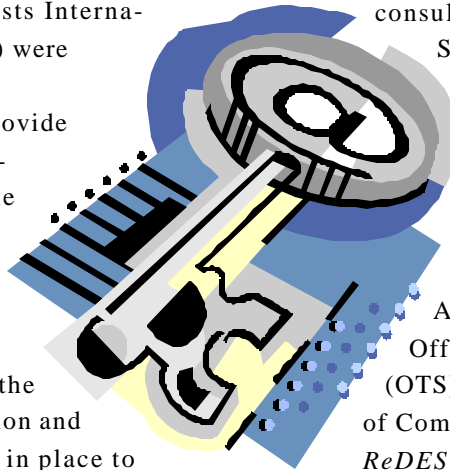
the growth of an internet/intranet/ extranet environment;

■ Define a set of high-level action plans for the future.

Analysts International (AI) consultants held Group Design Sessions with the "Internet Core Team" and key technical staff. The AI consultants interviewed DES staff, including the Information Technology Strategic Planning Advisory Board (ITSP AB), Office of Technology Services (OTS) Management, the DES Office of Communications, and the *ReDESign* and *No Wrong Door Project* team leads. Information was gathered about how DES currently hosts and maintains web pages and how staff envisions utilizing web technology in the future.

A New Web Environment

Barbara Bird has been assigned as the Internet Project Manager. A core Internet Work Group has started work on project plan tasks, as identified by the Internet consultants. The Information Technology Strategic Planning Advisory Board (ITSP AB), chaired by Shirley York, will work with Barbara Bird of the core Internet Work Group, DES Web Master and division program personnel to define, develop, and implement a centralized DES web environment.

The new web environment will host the following:

■ An Internet Web Site that will provide a single portal (point of entry) to DES on-line customer services, with current content and a consistent look and feel.

☐ An In**tra**net that will empower employees with information and on-line services.

■ An Extranet that will provide on-line services to DES service providers and vendors.

If you have any questions Please direct your questions and comments to Barbara Bird at (602) 542-5806.

State selected IBM to consolidate **'e-government'** initiatives

As part of Governor Jane Dee Hull's high technology agenda, IBM was selected to develop a new state web site designed to make doing business with the state easier and faster for citizens and businesses.

The Arizona @ Your Service web site or portal will consolidate the many State of Arizona Internet sites and move more services online. The site will offer 'one-stop shopping' to electronic government services.

"Helping our citizens do business with the state online is a key goal of this administration and the Arizona @ Your Service web site accomplishes this objective. Now people will have one access point for all state information. Now people can go online, instead of waiting in line," said Governor Hull.

Now IBM will work to provide that kind access to all state agencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

IBM will work with these subcontractors: EzGov, KPMG Consulting and Qwest. This will allow the state to develop a business model that requires no initial capital investment from the State. IBM has committed a capital investment of up to $1.5 million for the initial hardware and software infrastructure, the Portal itself, and the initial set of applications.

In Phase I over the next three months, IBM will focus on web design services, development services and marketing. For web design, the IBM team will design and implement a set of templates for web pages with a common graphic design. Marketing will include live demonstrations of Arizona's new applications and a grassroots awareness campaign in Tucson, Phoenix and other cities, bus signage, billboards and newspaper advertising.

Since access to the Internet is necessary to use online services, Governor Hull also is working to improving and expanding telecommunications services to all corners of the state.

Phase I will include the following services:

- Delivered Portal Design templates and guidelines
- State Parks camping and fishing reservations
- Game and Fish big game draw
- Occupational license renewals
- Access to UCC records
- Certified copies of UCC Statements from the Secretary of State of Arizona
- Renewal of Partnerships
- Trademarks and trade names
- Out-of-state title transfer
- Licensed practitioner search
- Parks Gift Shop
- Access to corporate records on file with the Arizona Corporation Commission
- Online filing of forms with the Arizona Corporation Commission

Save Time with Effective E-Mail Management

Try These Tips for Taking Control of Your Inbox
By Richard Porterfield

Are you buried in e-mail messages? Now that e-mail has become one of the most common ways to communicate – both at work and at home – many people feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they must manage. Microsoft Outlook® 98/2000

can help you manage your e-mail and add more time to your day with easy-to-use management features.

Let Rules Run Your Inbox

Use the Rules Wizard to establish rules that automatically file, delete, highlight, forward, or prioritize incoming and outgoing messages. You can arrange for undesirable e-mail to be sent automatically to a "junk" folder or to be alerted with a sound when you receive an

urgent e-mail. Once you set the rules the way you want them, you can apply those rules to instantly clean up information that already exists. Access the Rules Wizard from the **Tools** menu.

Look at Your E-Mail Your Way

Outlook offers several options for viewing your e-mail, so you can prioritize the most important messages. Organize your Inbox by who sent a message, the subject of a message, or when it arrived. Or choose from a variety of other views that highlight unread messages or those you've received within the last seven days. You can find all of these options by opening the **View** menu, pointing to **Current View**, and clicking the views you want.

Scan Your E-Mail Messages

You can use the timesaving Preview Pane or AutoPreview options in Outlook to preview a portion of each e-mail message and determine if you need to read it in its entirety. With AutoPreview, you can view the first three lines of each message in the main Outlook window before opening the message. In the Preview Pane, you can read the content of a message, open attachments, follow a hyperlink, and respond to meeting requests in a separate window at the bottom of the

screen-all without opening the specific message. To activate one these options, open the **View** menu and click **AutoPreview** or **Preview Pane**.

Find and Organize E-Mail

The Find and Organize tools help you conduct fast, easy searches for e-mail messages, appointments, and tasks, and they walk you through the steps required to organize your Inbox efficiently. You can create folders, rules, formatting, and views that do everything from identifying junk e-mail to applying a specified color to e-mail messages sent by a particular person. You can locate the Find and Organize tools by opening the **Tools** menu.

Create Your Own Storage System

Just like using a traditional file cabinet, you can create custom folders and store your e-mail as you read it. This makes it easier to locate particular e-mail messages and save them for future reference. To see these folders, make sure the Folder List is visible. If it isn't, open the **View** menu and click **Folder List**. To create new folders and subfolders, click **New Folder** on the **File** menu.

Convert a Message into an Appointment and More

Does the following sound familiar? You have a lengthy e-mail exchange with a colleague and then realize that a face-to-face meeting is necessary. Rather than creating a new meeting request and then copying and pasting text from the e-mail message, use the AutoCreate ➤

feature to create a meeting request from information in the e-mail thread. You can also use this feature to transform a contact into a task or a note into an appointment. Learn how by visiting the Office Update site, http://www.officeupdate.com/2000/articles/olitemch.htm.

Best Practices for Managing E-Mail

As the volume of your e-mail continues to increase, you may also want to consider using these strategies for managing your ever-expanding Inbox.

√   Schedule uninterrupted time to process e-mail.

√   Once you open a piece of e-mail, never close it without immediately taking some kind of action.

√   Try to spend no more than two minutes processing an e-mail message. For example, forward it on to others to handle, delete it, or schedule a meeting to resolve the issue raised in the mail. You'll be amazed how much e-mail you can handle in less than two minutes.

√   If you know it will take longer than two minutes to process a particular e-mail message and you cannot delegate it or take some other appropriate action, defer it to your task list. To do so, drag the message onto your **Tasks** folder. Then identify the next action in the Subject line, assign a due date, and file it in an appropriate category.

Cleaning up the Outlook Mailbox

Did you know that Outlook keeps every message that you have ever sent? …Every appointment? …Every task? …Every note? Your Outlook Mailbox can grow to be very large, very difficult to manage, and take a very long time to open/load (so now

you know why it takes so long for Outlook to start on your computer). You need to clean up your Outlook Mailbox. The solution includes a combination of filing, archiving and purging of Mailbox items.

As discussed above in 'Create Your Own Storage System', you can setup special project folders and move messages, tasks, notes, etc. related to the project to these folders. When the project is complete, then you need to archive or purge the folder from your Outlook Mailbox.

You can create an Archive Folder for your Outlook Mailbox. The Archive Folder is stored separate from the Outlook Mailbox, usually on your C:\ drive or a network drive (preferred). Messages, appointments, tasks, notes, etc. can be moved manually from the Outlook Mailbox or automatically using **AutoArchive**. **AutoArchive** can be found in **Tools**, **Options**, and **Other** settings.

If the message, appointment, task, note, etc. is worth deleting, then it is worth removing from your Outlook Mailbox and the Deleted Items folder. As a rule, set Outlook to "Empty the Deleted Items Folder upon Exiting" – empty your Deleted Items folder at the end of each day.

Again, set this rule in **Tools**, **Options**, and **Other** settings. If you don't want the item to be deleted, then don't delete it – move it to a different folder!

Additional Resources

Visit these sites for more information about how to manage e-mail effectively:

Microsoft Outlook site
http://www.microsoft.com/office/outlook/default.htm

Microsoft Business "How-To" site
http://www.microsoft.com/business/howto/

Outlook Tips and Tricks from Office Update
http://officeupdate.microsoft.com/2000/articlelist/OutlookTips.asp

Outlook How-to Articles from Office Update
http://officeupdate.microsoft.com/articlelist/o2koutlookarticles.htm

Outlook 97 and Outlook 98 instructions may be different than the referenced Outlook 2000 instructions, but the features and settings are nearly the same.

Please consult your Network Administrator if you are unsure of the setting in Outlook and, especially, before attempting to download or install any add-in or update to your system.

Barbara Norton Award

Barbara Norton is a founding member of the Arizona Hunger Advisory Council, and is one of the leading advocates in the state for low-income people. She recently celebrated her 85th birthday.

Ms. Norton recently stated that "there is nothing abstract about hunger, especially hungry kids". She recalled having a disabled man with six children ask her for help. She worked with him to get more food for his family. She also recalled a time when the Palmdale School in Phoenix received only 10 free lunches for children per week. That was the day she helped organize a parents committee to address the issue of school lunches.

The plaque on the award reads: "In honor of Barabara Norton, humanitarian and advocate, who for a lifetime has dedicated herself to action on behalf of poor, powerless and hungry people. The Arizona Hunger Advisory Council, of which Ms. Norton is a founding member, celebrated her many gifts and accomplishments by establishing on December 18, 1999, a periodic award to recognize advocates who exemplify dedication and commitment, and have ensured by their efforts and actions, progress towards food security for all Arizonans.

Vince Wood:
A career dedicated to improving access to resources and benefits for hungry Arizonans.

A volunteer committee of council members selected these individuals to receive the year 2000 Award, among them:

Mr. Vince Wood, Assistant Director, Department of Economic Security (DES) Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility, for a career dedicated to improving access to resources and benefits for hungry Arizonans.

Mr. Wood noted that the Council provides important information to help steer the Department. He also indicated that DES is partnering with Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs and the Glendale public housing authorities to lend housing assistance to residents, 70 percent of which are elderly and disabled. Seven other communities are also interested in working with DES in this effort.

Outstanding Achievement Recognition Certificates were also given to the following individuals from DES:

Mr. Moe Gallegos for developing the Food Stamp Outreach Pilot Program in Arizona.

Mr. Dayne Coffee for developing the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) program in Arizona, which provided program flexibility.

OPINING

*By: Cathy Putze

Everyone has an opinion. We have opinions about how little Johnny should behave, what 13 year old Sally should wear, how good Mame's hair looks dyed, and how cute that fluffy little kitty is.

We all got them and what's more each one of us thinks our own opinion is the very best. We are a highly opinionated society. It's not surprising then that we should also have opinions about people who look or act differently from us. For the life of me to this day I cannot fully comprehend why young people pierce their tongues, but then that's my opinion.

Their fashion statement is a little different than mine. However, since I'm lacking in fashion, I doubt Barbie Doll would want to be seen with me. I do have some characteristics that cause a lot of opinions to come forth. I have cerebral palsy which is a brain centered condition that affects the ability to control my muscles and results in what "experts" opine to be poor motor planning. To me it's just plain goofiness. Some other opining ventures that I have experienced range the gamut from "weird" to "courageous" to "hyper" to whatever comes to someone's mind. As I walk down a street, or into a building, rather than strange looks or gawks, I would like to see a "smile" that says "I'm glad to see you". People form opinions and then opine on their experiences and understanding of people with disabilities. So too I opine about people without disabilities and categorize them according to my experiences. What results is a mass conglomeration on opinions which unfortunately see only parts of you and me. I am not a disability, I am a person who has a disability.

People are not diabetics, behavioral problems, or whatever other labels there are. People are people first. We all need to convey to each other that we value each other and welcome each other. Words can offend intentionally and unintentionally. People with disabilities face constant devaluing of who they are on a daily basis. You can help by remembering to use words that focus on the person first and not the disability. Use the people first language. Try to think and speak in terms of person with a disability, person who uses a wheelchair, person who has a hearing impairment. Make our day and yours a joyful day. Get to know us and give us the chance to know you. We both will find out we're great people.

* Cathy Putze is a DES Personnel Specialist with the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Minority Vender Focus Group Meeting

Recently, Director Clayton hosted a discussion forum in Phoenix, Arizona, with representatives of local community venders and providers. He was seeking input from small, women-owned, and minority-owned firms who currently provide or are seeking to provide commodities or services to the Department. He was seeking their guidance on the following:

1. How can the Department better serve, partner and recruit venders and human service providers who are sensitive to our diverse client base?

2. How can the Department develop successful partnerships to deliver services to our clients while increasing the contracting opportunities to small, woman and minority-owned businesses in Arizona?

3. How can the Department improve or modify its internal contracting system to increase these types of partnerships?

The Director, along with the Governor, is committed to enhancing these important partnerships and he hopes these forums will provide the necessary input from our community service providers and stakeholders to enhance service delivery to our clients while increasing the diversity of our contracting partners.

Career Achievements

20 Years:
Donald E. Birchett, DESS; Tonia M. Blackman, DESS; Virginia H. Choisnard, DDD; John W. Orr, DERS; Elaine Rostolsky, DCYF; Deborah A. Stock, DDD; Ray L. Trejo, DERS; Luese Washington, DBME.

25 Years:
Bertha Aragon, DERS; Ruthanne Austinson, DCYF; Fred Bingham, DERS; D. Mike Brennan, DERS; Marcia L. Crawley, DDD; Ashton S. Kingsley, DDD; Carol J. Krivonak, DDD.

30 Years:
David Reyes, DACS; Gerry M. Steele, DERS.

Retirements

Joy Eustice	DERS	11 years of service
Berta Knaus	DBME	27 years of service
Truyen C. Le	DBTS	12 years of service
Tom Quijada	DESS	34 years of service
Tim Acuff	DBME	29 years of service
Leland W. Morse	DCYF	34 years of service
Joanne Parris	DBME	23 years of service
Susan Sveen	DBME	11 years of service
Wayne Thisdell	DERS	18 years of service

New Options In Case Management

The Division of Developmental Disabilities is launching the Case Management Pilot after receiving approval from the federal Health Care Financing Administration. The Pilot will be implemented in three areas of the State: the Western Area of District I and all of Districts II and VI. Any individual who is eligible for services from the Division may participate in the Pilot.

The Pilot will make various options in Case Management (Support Coordination) available based on family or individual choice. The options include a Division staff person, a contract agency staff person, an individual under contract and a family member or the consumer of services. These choices will be available starting in June.

tence) so that you can offer consistent and accurate responses to client questions. When you don't know an answer, don't guess. Find the answer and get back to the client.

You can still be *responsive* and demonstrate a willingness to provide service even when you can't approve benefits, or honor a parent's request to keep a child in the home. One technique to do this is to offer alternatives. Never say to a client "That's just the way it is" or "That's not my job". Rather say something like "I'm sorry, I'm unable to do that for you, however, I *can . . .*" or "I wish I could help you with that, but it's not in my area of expertise, however, I can refer you to . . ."

You can demonstrate *access* by smiling at the client or looking interested, and maintaining eye contact. *Courtesy* simply requires saying please and thank you, as you explain to clients what is required of them in the process, rather than using such words as "You have to . . ." or "You need to . . .". You also demonstrate courtesy by looking up to greet clients immediately when they present themselves in front of you.

The true essence of good customer service really comes down to a lesson most of us learned in childhood – doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. In other words, think about the things that make you feel as though you have received good customer service and adopt or adapt those techniques into the way you deal with your customers. Also think about times when you have received poor customer service, and be sure to avoid doing those things when dealing with your clients.

Bragging Writes

To Luis Ordonez, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Tucson

" It is quite evident that Luis knows about the "special needs", cares deeply about our clients and proceeds to find a solution to any problem. Luis shows a strong commitment to the persons whom he represents. We thank him very much for all he does."
O.&A.

To Joe Reindle, Division of Business and Technology Services, Phoenix

" Thank you for taking time out of your very busy day to assist me whenever I asked with a smile and an easy going attitude. You never seem to complain no matter how many times I asked the same question. You are truly appreciated for all your hard work and dedication to DES. Thanks never seems to be enough."
M.E.

To Joaquin Perez & Shawn Morris, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility, Phoenix

" I would like to send my gratitude and congratulations to both of you for the good job the two of you are doing. We, in refugee resettlement work, are so grateful for the improvement in relations with your office. Our caseworkers and the refugees are treated with respect and dignity. I attribute the improvement to the leadership that the two of you have brought to this unit. We look forward to furthering this positive working relationship. "
Lutheran Social Ministry of the Southwest

To Judy Dillahay, Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services, Bullhead

"I would like to thank the staff of your DES Child Care. I was divorced a few years back and forced to care for my family solely on my income and thanks to you I was able to work and place my children in a great child care facility "New day School" and I greatly appreciate all of you A-Lot!"
S, TJ.&C.

To Sondra Burns, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility, Bullhead

"Because you always get things done with such a cheerful attitude and go the extra mile in all you do, you're someone highly thought of, and you deserve sincerest gratitude for all the special traits that make you "you"."
K.W.

To Brenda Sharkey, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Glendale

"I would like to take this opportunity to make you aware of what a compassionate and professional job Brenda did on my claim for disability. She always returned my calls in a timely manner, answered my questions, and was very compassionate about what a difficult process this can be. I like to be treated like a person and so often people are so busy doing their job that they forget who the customer is. Ms. Sharkey did a wonderful job of not forgetting that and still did a very thorough and professional job of processing my claim. It is important to me to write this because I feel that Brenda deserves to know what a terrific job she is doing. I thank you Brenda for making this process as easy as possible."
J.H.

We're on the Web
www.de.state.az.us

Jane Dee Hull, Governor
John L. Clayton, Director

Quality Counts

The Seven Characteristics Customers Want in a Service

By: Gloria Díaz

Delivering good customer service is integral to any organization's quality initiative. When we deliver good customer service, the customer benefits, but so does the employee delivering the service.

There are seven characteristics of what customers want in a service. They are: *reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication* and *credibility*.

Reliability refers to consistency in the performance of our work; dependability. *Responsiveness* means that we have demonstrated a willingness to provide service, and that we are timely in providing that service. *Competence* simply means that we demonstrate to our clients that we possess the required skills and knowledge to perform our work. *Access* does not simply refer to access to our offices and how easy it is to find our phone numbers in the phone book. Access also refers to our level of approachability and how easy we make it for our clients to contact us. *Courtesy* is nothing more than treating clients with politeness and respect. *Communication* refers to the extent to which we keep our clients informed of what's happening with their case, or how long it will be until someone comes out to the lobby to speak with them. Lastly, *credibility* refers to how well we come across as being trustworthy and believable.

This may seem like a long list, but these are not especially difficult issues to address. We won't address all seven of these here. However, here are a couple of ways you may be able to ensure you demonstrate these characteristics in dealing with your clients.

First of all, make sure that you know your policies (*reliability and compe*